

CEC Ministerial Statement - 2018

Twenty-Fifth Regular Session of the CEC Council

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, United States, 27 June 2018—We, the Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), met for our 25th annual Regular Session, focusing on “Innovation and Partnerships for Green Growth.” The Session showcased partnerships among federal, state, academic, tribal, youth and private sectors, that foster innovation, technological advances, and entrepreneurship to promote environmental and ecosystems protection in North America.

Sustainable Communities, Green Growth, and Resilient Economies through Innovation and Partnerships

At the U.S. National Weather Center, in Norman, Oklahoma, our academic, state, and private sector partners demonstrated how science, innovation, radar and modeling technology help us monitor the climate and atmosphere to inform our research, policies, and preparedness to adapt to, or mitigate, atmospheric events, extreme weather, forest fires and their impacts on human health, infrastructure and our economies. Radar technologies can also track North American species migrations and advance CEC and other North American efforts to preserve species critical to agricultural sustainability and ecotourism.

Last year, in Prince Edward Island, Canada, we approved our 2017-2018 Operational plan. We are pleased with progress achieved in implementing ten projects that address our shared priorities, including: monitoring health effects from extreme weather; mitigating food loss and waste and its associated social, environmental and economic costs; greening marine transport to reduce pollution from the transport of our growing trade; partnering with the private sector to increase industrial energy efficiency and reduce pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions; supporting species conservation through sustainable trade of species; and building capacity to reduce sources of marine litter and their impacts to habitats, fisheries and the economy.

Youth Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Partnerships for Sustainable Growth

Building upon the first Youth Innovation Challenge (YIC) at our 2017 Session in Prince Edward Island, we completed a second YIC to engage North American youth in the work of the CEC, increase awareness of shared priority sustainability issues, and facilitate communication and collaboration among youth on entrepreneurship, innovation and partnerships for green growth. We invited youth to propose their concepts for economic growth with environmental, ecosystems, and health protection. We invited their ideas on technology, systems, resource efficiencies, applications and education, recapture and use of waste streams, and partnerships across sectors. To provide contestants with guidance and experience, we established a trilateral expert panel with diverse business experience. Furthermore, to enhance the winning concepts and showcase the value of academic, government and private sector collaboration in educating and developing future environmental leaders and entrepreneurs, we partnered with the Tom Love Innovation Hub and the Rani K. Irani Center at the University of Oklahoma [, Simon Fraser University, in Vancouver and ??????? in Mexico] to advance fabrication, software, business and legal elements of the winning projects. We are proud of the North American winners, with their projects on

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Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) and Secretariat

We acknowledge and appreciate the valuable contributions to North American environmental stewardship made by the members of the JPAC, and their continued efforts to reach out to civil society on issues of global and regional importance, including emerging trade and environment challenges in North America. In this session, JPAC reported to the Council on what they heard from experts and members of the public regarding ...We also acknowledge and thank the Secretariat for their expert support to Council and management and implementation of work projects, initiatives and other Council efforts.

Submissions on Enforcement Matters

The Submissions on Enforcement Matters (SEM) process continues to be an efficient and valuable public participation mechanism, promoting the effective enforcement of environmental law in our three countries. The Secretariat received three new SEMs in 2017-18 and is completing a factual record for the Agricultural Waste Burning submission. (note—we can refine this language once we consult with Alt Reps & SEM lawyers. SEMs were addressed in 2011, 12, 13, 14.)

North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action (NAPECA) and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)

We are grateful to the members of the Traditional Ecological Knowledge Expert Group for their contributions to the development of the CEC Operational Plan. We also appreciate the participation of indigenous representatives in several projects of the Operational Plan. In addition, we are especially pleased that six out of seven NAPECA grants awarded in the 2017-2018 cycle are led by, or serve, indigenous and local communities to advance preservation and teaching of TEK, sustainability and growth.

Announcements and New Initiatives (Place holder for potential announcements)

1. Innovation Hub Network/Collaborative/Partnership (Tom Love Innovation Hub-Simon Fraser University – Mexico TBD).
2. NWC TBD
3. CEC-NWC Atlas Partnership TBD

Conclusion

The CEC is a long-standing platform for environmental cooperation among Canada, Mexico and the United States to tackle current and emerging challenges on sustainability, growth, and environmental and ecosystem protection and preservation in the context of North American trade. We are proud to continue enhancing the focus of cooperation, engaging the public, youth, indigenous and local communities, academia and the private sector to inform our strategic plans and implementation of our work.

We reiterate our commitment to green and sustainable growth and the protection and preservation of our shared environment, ecosystems, resources, flora and fauna through our continuing trilateral collaboration.

We look forward to meeting next year in _____, Mexico.

APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL:

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